

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 JUSE-00
NSAE-00 SNM-02 TRSE-00 USIA-06 NSC-05 OES-06 OMB-01
DODE-00 HEW-04 AGRE-00 AID-05 IGA-02 /073 W
-----100722Z 120649 /17

R 091003Z FEB 77

FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3003
INFO DEA HQS WASHDC
AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
USMISSION GENEVA
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMCONSUL MANDALAY

C O N F I D E N T I A L RANGOON 0419

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR, BM

SUBJ: OPIUM -- THE STATISTICAL MORASS

REF: (A) STATE 18257, (B) RANGOON 3810

1. WE HAD HOPED TO SPUR THE APPROPRIATE GUB AUTHORITIES
TO COLLECT THE TYPE OF INFORMATION REQUESTED IN REF A.
UNFORTUNATELY, OUR EFFORTS HAVE NOT YET BORNE FRUIT.
FOLLOWING ARE THE RESULTS OF THE MISSION'S LATEST INVESTI-
GATIONS:

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A. HEROIN ADDICTION PATTERNS AND DOSAGE RATES. OUR
CONTACTS IN THE DRUG REHABILITATION COMMUNITY REPORT THAT
HEROIN USAGE PATTERNS HAVE CHANGED IN THE LAST SEVERAL
MONTHS. UNLIKE THE SITUATION LAST FALL WHERE MOST URBAN
HEROIN ADDICTS WERE SMOKING NUMBER 4 (REPORTED IN REF B),
THE MAJORITY OF HEROIN ADDICTS IN RANGOON HAVE SWITCHED TO
INTRAVENOUS USE. THE CHIEF OF RANGOON'S DRUG REHABILITA-

TION PROGRAM HAS INFORMED US THAT BASED ON ADMISSIONS TO HIS PROGRAM, HE WOULD ESTIMATE THAT INJECTORS OUTNUMBER SMOKERS BY THREE TO ONE. THE SWITCH IS ATTRIBUTABLE TO ECONOMIC FACTORS, AS LESS HEROIN IS NEEDED TO ACHIEVE THE SAME RESULT WHEN INJECTED INTRAVENOUSLY. THE TYPICAL INTRAVENOUS USER IN RANGOON IN JANUARY 1977 WAS SPENDING KYAT 22 A DAY TO MAINTAIN HIS OR HER HABIT. AT CURRENT PRICES THIS WILL BUY APPROXIMATELY .4 GRAMS OF HEROIN. (IF THE ADDICT MAINTAINED THIS HABIT FOR YEAR HE OR VSHE WOULD CONSUME 146 GRAMS OF HEROIN.) THE TYPICAL NUMBER 4 SMOKER WAS SPENDING KYAT 55 PER DAY, WHICH BUYS APPROXIMATELY ONE GRAM OF HEROIN, AND WOULD THERFORE CONSUME 365 GRAMS IN ONE YEAR. HEROIN ADDICTS IN RANGOON USE NUMBER 4 ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY; APPARENTLY NO NUMBER 3 IS AVAILABLE IN RANGOON. NUMBER 3 HEROIN IS USED IN CITIES IN NORTHERN BURMA, HOWEVER . WE HAVE RECENTLY BEEN INFORMED BY BURMESE AUTHORITIES THAT A HEROIN REFINERY WAS DISCOVERED IN MANDALAY AND 18 KILOS OF NUMBER 3 AND NUMBER 4 WERE SEIZED (SEE RANGOON 0370).

B. OPIUM CONSUMPTION. IN OUR FIRST ATTEMPT TO QUANTIFY OPIUM CONSUMPTION IN BURMA (REF B) WE MULTIPLIED THE NUMBER OF OPIJM ADDICTS BY THE CALCULATED DOSAGE RATE. WE HAVE SINCE LEARNED THAT THIS IS TOO SIMPLISTIC AND APPROACH. OPIUM IS COMMONLY USED MORE THAN ONCE SINCE THE ASHES FROO THE FIRST SMOKING ARE COLLECTED FOR FURTHER CONSUMPTION. THEREFORE, OUR CONCLUSION THAT BURMA'S OPIJM ADDICTS ANNUALLY CONSUME 221 METRIC TONS OF OPIUM WOULD APPEAR TO BE OFF THE MARK AND SHOULD BE REDUCED BY AN AS YET UNDETERMINED, AND PERHAPS UNDETERMINABLE, FACTOR. CONFIDENTIAL

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C. ADDICT POPULATION. FOR WANT OF ANY RECENT RELIABLE INPUTS WE ARE CONTENT TO STICK WITH THE FIGURES USED IN OUR INTITAL ESTIMATE, NAMESLY, 40,000 HEROIN ADDICTS AND 90,000 OPIUM ADDICTS. THE NUMBER OF ADDICTS REGISTERED UNDER THE NARCOTICS DRUG LAW HAS RISEN TO 20,000, BUT AS WE INDICATED IN REF B THIS FIGURE HAS NO REAL RELATIONSHIP TO THE ACTUAL ADDICT POPULATION IN BURMA.

2. WE WILL CONTINUE TO GATHER THE INFORMATION REQUESTED IN REF A AND WILL REPORT OUR FINDINGS AS THEY BECOME AVAILABLE.

3. COMMENT: OUR CURRENT INFORMATION INDICATES A LOWER DOMESTIC BURMESE CONSUMPTION THAN WE ESTIMATED IN REF B. IF INTRAVENOUS USE INCREASES AS COMPARED TO SMOKING, THEN DOOESTIC REQUIREMENTS WILL CONTINUE TO DECREASE WITH THE OBVIOUS COROLLARY OF AN INCREASED SUPPLY FOR EXPORT. OSBORN UNQTTTE.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 09-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Disposition Remarks:
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Errors: N/A
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ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770258/aaaabzjq.tel
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